

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 16393 140516Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 AID-05 HA-05
/095 W

-----012419 150437Z /11

R 131512Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4306
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 16393

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ASEAN, CH, VM, JA, US
SUBJECT: SHIFTING SOVIET ATTITUDE TOWARD ASEAN

REF: (A) TOKYO 12609 (NOTAL), (B) SINGAPORE 3108

1. JULY 12 IZVESTIYA CARRIES LENGTHY AND INTERESTING
ARTICLE ON ASEAN WHICH SEEMS TO REPRESENT A SOVIET
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ATTEMPT TO REJECT ASEAN CAKE AND EAT IT TOO. ASSUME
DEPT. HAS FBIS TEXT. BASICALLY FIRST HALF OF ARTICLE
REPEATS STANDARD SOVIET LINE ON U.S. AND JAPANESE
ATTEMPT TO USE ASEAN MILITARILY AND ECONOMICALLY, IN
ORDER TO SECURE A PREDOMINANT ROLE FOR THEMSELVES IN
SOUTHEAST ASIA. SECOND, MORE INTERESTING PART OF
ARTICLE, CONSISTS OF ATTACK ON PRC FOR ITS ATTEMPT TO

USE ASEAN FOR ITS PURPOSES, AMONG WHICH ARE "...TO HINDER THE DEVELOPMENT OF GOOD NEIGHBORLY COOPERATION BETWEEN SOCIALIST STATES OF INDO-CHINA - VIETNAM AND LAOS - AND STATES OF ASEAN AND TO UTILIZE THE ASSOCIATION IN THE INTERESTS OF ITS ANTI-SOVIET STRATEGY." REMAINDER OF ARTICLE GOES ON TO ATTACK PRC FOR ATTEMPT TO USE "PROTECTION" OF 20 MILLION OVERSEAS CHINESE AS EXCUSE FOR INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF COUNTRIES OF S.E. ASIA. ARTICLE CONCLUDES WITH REMINDER FROM INDONESIAN PRESIDENT SUKARTO THAT ASEAN WAS NOT CREATED FOR CONFRONTATION BUT FOR DEVELOPMENT OF PEACEFUL COOPERATION.

2. DURING MAY 12 RECEPTION FOR VISITING EXECUTIVE SEMINAR POL COUNSELOR TOLD ASTUTE ASIA WATCHER V. B. YAKUBOVSKIY OF INSTITUTE OF WORLD ECONOMICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THAT FROM THE VERY INCEPTION OF ASEAN HE THOUGHT THE SOVIETS HAD BEEN PULLING THEIR PUNCHES, FOR THEY SAW DISTINCT POSSIBILITIES OF ASEAN EVOLVING INTO BUFFER AGAINST FUTURE CHINESE EFFORTS TO EXPAND PEKING'S INFLUENCE. BY IRONIC TWIST, CONTINUED POL COUNSELOR, CHINESE HAD NOW ENDORSED ASEAN BUT LOCAL RESIDUAL SUSPICIONS OVER CHINESE INTENTIONS WOULD REMAIN. IN THIS CONTEXT NEGATIVE SOVIET STANCE ON ASEAN SEEMED TO BE PRIMARILY CONFIDENTIAL

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DRIVEN BY DESIRE TO STAY IN STEP WITH HANOI, BUT ONE COULD FORESEE A SITUATION IN WHICH HANOI -- AND MOSCOW -- WOULD DO A VOLTE-FACE. YAKUBOVSKIY DID NOT DEMUR -- ALTHOUGH HE NOTED ANTI-SOVIET SENTIMENTS CONTINUED TO EXIST IN "CERTAIN ASEAN CIRCLES" (E.G., INDONESIAN MILITARY) -- AND HE NOTED THAT HANOI MIGHT SEE "ECONOMIC" ADVANTAGE IN DEALING WITH ASEAN.

3. COMMENT: WITH HANOI'S NEW INTEREST IN ASEAN, SOVIET MEDIA HAS BEGUN TO SHIFT IN MANNER CONCEDED BY YAKUBOVSKIY. DEVELOPMENT OF EVENTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA HAS BEEN TOO RAPID TO ALLOW ALL CONTRADICTIONS BETWEEN PREVIOUS LINE AND STILL-EVOLVING PRESENT LINE TO BE WORKED OUT, HENCE SLIGHTLY OUT OF FOCUS IZVESTIYA ARTICLE REPORTED ABOVE. MATLOCK

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